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SUBJECT: AMERICAN PRESS SUMMARY

1. HIGHLIGHTS. MONDAY PAPERS HEADLINE MRS. MEIR RESIGNS AS ISRAELI LEADER, ANNOUNCES SUPRISE MOVE AT LABOR PARTY MEETING AFTER SEVERE CRITICISM, NEW ELECTION POSSIBLE; EGYPT PROPOSES OIL TALKS. NYTIMES HAS BRANDT SET BACK IN HAMBURG VOTE, SOCIAL DEMOCRATS LOSE SEAT IN STATE LEGISLATURE; SIRICA'S DECISION ON JURY'S REPORT COULD COME TODAY, FINDINGS ON NIXON'S ALLEGED TIE TO WATERGATE MAY BE GIVEN TO HOUSE PANEL. WASHPOST HAS COMECON DEBATES OIL PRICE, SHARP BOOST FEARED, FINLAND MUST PAY SOVIETS ADDED HALF BILLION FOR OIL; FORD EXPECTS NIXON-HILL COOPERATION.

1A. NYTIMES, INSIDE, HAS EGYPT HAILS SOVIET AS STURDY FRIEND, STORY APPEARING IN EDITORIALS DURING GROMYKO VISIT AND VIEWED AS ATTEMPT TO CONVINCE ARAB WORLD THAT CAIRO INTENDED TO REMAIN GOOD FRIENDS WITH MOSCOW IN SPITE OF RESUMPTION OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH US; GEORGE F. KENNAN CRITICIZES EUROPE ON UNITY, ARTICLE APPEARING IN UNCLASSIFIED

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CURRENT ISSUE OF FOREIGN POLICY; LIBERALS DEBATE SUPPORT TO

HEATH; PENTAGON CITES BUILD-UP BY HANOI, REPORTS 150,000 TONS OF SUPPLIES SENT TO SOUTH.

2. KISSINGER. WASHPOST, BONN, BERGER REPORTS KISSINGER COMPLETED LATEST SWING THROUGH MIDDLE EAST YESTERDAY WITH US-ARAB RELATIONS PERCEPTIBLY IMPROVING BUT OIL EMBARGO STILL IN EFFECT. FOLLOWING COLORFUL SEND-OFF FROM AMMAN, KISSINGER ARRIVED IN BONN TO SPEAK WITH WEST GERMAN LEADERS. WHILE US OFFICIALS APPEARED OPTIMISTIC THAT ARAB OIL EMBARGO WOULD BE LIFTED SHORTLY, SAYS BERGER, THEY CAUTIONED THAT DIFFICULTY OF ACHIEVING ARAB UNITY MAY TEND TO PRESERVE EMBARGO. US OFFICIALS CONTINUED STUDIOUS SILENCE ON MEETING OF ARAB OIL MINISTERS, SAYING IT WAS EASIER FOR ARABS TO SOLVE IT AS ARAB PROBLEM. UPCOMING SYRIAN-ISRAELI DISENGAGEMENT DISCUSSIONS WERE PREDICTED TO BE MURDEROUSLY DIFFICULT BY HIGH US OFFICIAL TRAVELING WITH KISSINGER. US OFFICIALS SAY SYRIA'S AGREEMENT TO DISCUSS DISENGAGEMENT WITH ISRAEL RATHER THAN DEMANDING IMMEDIATE AND TOTAL WITHDRAWAL IS IN ITSELF AN EMOTIONAL AND INTELLECTUAL GIANT STEP. ACCORDING BERGER, US OFFICIALS REPORTEDLY DO NOT YET KNOW WHETHER SOVIETS ARE READY TO ENCOURAGE DISENGAGEMENT. BEFORE LEAVING AMMAN, KISSINGER ANNOUNCED KING HUSSEIN WOULD BE VISITING US MARCH 12. BERGER REPORTS KISSINGER ALSO SAID HE AND JORDANIANS HAD REACHED COMPLETE AGREEMENT, BUT US OFFICIALS SAID AGREEMENT OF TOUGH ISRAELI-JORDANIAN PROBLEM IS STILL SOME TIME OFF.

2A. NYTIMES, BONN, WHITNEY REPORTS KISSINGER WILL TALK WITH BRANDT TODAY AND THEN FLY TO BRUSSELS PRESUMABLY TO BRIEF REPRESENTATIVES OF NATO ON MIDDLE EAST MISSION, BEFORE GOING ON TO WASHINGTON TONIGHT. OFFICIALS ABOARD KISSINGER'S PLANE HAD HINTED THEY KNEW OF EGYPTIAN PLANS FOR PROPOSED OIL TALKS BUT FELT IT WAS NOT HELPFUL AT THIS POINT TO DISCUSS EMBARGO. SECRETARY HAD NOTHING TO SAY ON THE SUBJECT PUBLICLY. ACCORDING WHITNEY, KISSINGER CAME TO BONN TO REPORT BRIEFLY TO SCHEEL ON MIDDLE EAST TRIP. HIGH OFFICIAL SAID KISSINGER WAS RETURNING HOME SATISFIED WITH ARRANGEMENT HE HAD MADE WITH SYRIA AND ISRAEL FOR TALKS ON TROOP SEPARATION. LAST NIGHT AT AIRPORT KISSINGER

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SPOKE OF IMPORTANCE OF CLOSE COOPERATION BETWEEN US AND EUROPE, AND, SAYS WHITNEY, HE CLEARLY WANTS TO GIVE SUCH COOPERATION A NEW IMPETUS IN HIS VISIT WHICH IS ALSO AIMED AT SATISFYING EUROPEAN COMPLAINTS OF TOO LITTLE CONSULTATION ON IMPORTANT MATTERS. SCHEEL SAID HE WOULD REPORT ON SUBSTANCE OF DISCUSSIONS WITH KISSINGER AT MEETING IN BRUSSELS TODAY. ON AGENDA IS EUROPEAN OFFER OF BROAD ECONOMIC AND INDUSTRIAL COOPERATION WITH ALL ARAB COUNTRIES,

NOT JUST OIL PRODUCING ONES. KISSINGER WAS UNDERSTOOD TO

WANT TO TALK ABOUT TWO MAJOR CONCERNS WHILE IN BONN. FIRST WAS STATUS OF NEW ATLANTIC CHARTER, AND SECOND, KISSINGER PLANNED TO DISCUSS PROGRESS WITH SOVIETS ON SALT, MBFR AND CSCE.

2B. NYTIMES, BONN, GWERTZMAN REPORTS IRONIES SEEM TO ABOUND ON KISSINGER TRIP. NEWSMEN HAVE BEEN STRUCK BY WARMTH THAT ARAB LEADERS HAVE SHOWN FOR US IN GENERAL AND KISSINGER IN PARTICULAR. BUT DESPITE ALL THE RHETORIC AND BANQUETS, KISSING AND GIFT-GIVING, ARABS HAVE NOT GIVEN KISSINGER WHAT AMERICAN WANT - LIFTING OF OIL EMBARGO. IT MAY COME AT ARAB OIL MINISTERS MEETING, SAYS GWERTZMAN, BUT KISSINGER, HAVING BEEN EMBARRASSED BY EARLIER BURST OF OPTIMISM, HAS ORDERED US OFFICIALS TO SAY NOTHING. PROBABLY NO SECRECY OF STATE IN HISTORY, SAYS GWERTZMAN, HAS HAD CLOSER RELATIONSHIP WITH NEWSMEN WHO COVER HIM. ON MIDDLE EAST TRIPS, NEWSMEN ARE CONTINUALLY IN COMMUNICATION WITH KISSINGER. AT BACK-GROUND BRIEFINGS WHERE KISSINGER HIMSELF CANNOT BE QUOTED, WHATEVER HE SAYS MUST BE ATTRIBUTED TO "SENIOR AMERICAN OFFICIALS." KISSINGER, WHO IN WASHINGTON ALMOST ALWAYS SPEAKS FOR QUOTATION, SAYS HE NEEDS HELP OF BACKGROUND CLOAK TO ALLOW HIM TO CONDUCT HIS NEGOTIATIONS WITH FLEXIBLE HAND. HE ARGUES IF HE WERE FORCED TO SPEAK ON RECORD, HE WOULD HAVE TO PROVIDE LESS INFORMATION.

3. MIDDLE EAST. NYTIMES, CAIRO, TANNER REPORTS EGYPT HAS PROPOSED THAT OIL MINISTERS OF ARAB OIL-PRODUCING COUNTRIES MEET IN TRIPOLI NEXT SUNDAY TO CONSIDER, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THE EASING OF THEIR OIL EMBARGO AGAINST US. EGYPTIAN ACTION BELIEVED REFLECTION OF FACT THAT KISSINGER, UNCLASSIFIED

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IN HIS VISITS TO DAMASCUS AND JERUSALEM LAST WEEK, WAS ABLE TO NUDGE THE TWO HOSTILE COUNTRIES TOWARD CONSULTATION ON DISENGAGEMENT. SADAT WOULD NOT HAVE SUGGESTED NEW DATE FOR CONFERENCE IF HE DID NOT HAVE AT LEAST TACIT APPROVAL OF SYRIA, ARAB DIPLOMATS SAID. HOWEVER, ARAB DIPLOMATS CAUTIONED AGAINST TAKING IT FOR GRANTED THAT OIL MINISTERS EVEN IF THEY MEET SUNDAY, WILL AUTOMATICALLY EASE EMBARGO AGAINST US. REASONS FOR AND AGAINST SUCH ACTION WILL BE CAREFULLY WEIGHED, DIPLOMATS SAID. SADAT IS BELIEVED TO BE EAGER TO SHOW APPRECIATION FOR KISSINGER'S PEACEMAKING BY ASKING FELLOW ARAB LEADERS TO EASE EMBARGO AT EARLIEST MOMENT THEY REGARD AS CONSISTENT WITH OVERALL ARAB INTERESTS.

3A. WASHPOST, CAIRO, STORY FROM NEWS DISPATCHES ADDS

MIDDLE EAST NEWS AGENCY SAID SAUDI ARABIA, KUWAIT, ABU DHABI, QATAR, AND BAHRAIN ARE IN FAVOR OF HOLDING MEETING MARCH 10. TWO BEIRUT NEWSPAPERS SAID KING FAISAL REFUSED TO SOFTEN HIS TERMS FOR LIFTING EMBARGO WHEN HE MET KISSINGER SATURDAY.

4. PENTATON/SALT. WASHPOST GETLER REPORTS SCHLESINGER IN HIS ANNUAL REPORT TODAY WILL URGE CONGRESS TO KEEP IN MIND SOVIET ACTIONS IN THE OCTOBER MID-EAST WAR WHEN IT CONSIDERS THE DEFENSE BUDGET. SCHLESINGER SAYS SOVIETS HAVE APPARENTLY DECIDED TO STRIVE FOR AT LEAST COMPARABLE QUALITATIVE CAPABILITIES AND ARE CONSIDERING THE DEPLOYMENT OF LARGE NUMBERS OF HEAVY AND POSSIBLY VERY ACCURATE MISSILES WHICH COULD POSE A SERIOUS THREAT TO U.S. LAND MISSILES AND BOMBERS. IN ADDITION TO DISCUSSING HIS VIEW THAT US SHOULD HAVE A MORE FLEXIBLE NUCLEAR SRTATEGY , SCHLESINGER EXPANDS ON HIS BELIEF THAT THE WAY BALANCE OF POWER IS PERCEIVED MAY BE AS IMPORTANT AS ACTUAL ABILITY TO FIGHT. ACCORDING TO SCHLESINGER, THE US, WHILE DESIRING A MUTUAL REDUCTION OF STRATEGIC FORCES, CANNOT POSTPONE MOVING NEW WEAPONS INTO DEVELOPMENT IN THE ABSENCE OF SOVIET RESTRAINT. GETLER SAYS TONE OF SCHLESINGER REMARKS WITH RESPECT TO SOVIET INTENTIONS WAS CLEARLY MORE

SKEPTICAL THAN THAT EXPRESSED SINCE END OF OCTOBER WAR BY NIXON AND KISSINGER.

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4A. NYTIMES FINNEY REPORTS SCHLESINGER'S DEFENSE POSTURE STATEMENT SAYS US WILL NOT INSIST ON STRICT NUMERICAL EQUALITY WITH THE SOVIETS IN ANY FUTURE SALT AGREEMENT. THE US WILL ACCEPT ASYMMETRIES IN FORCES AS LONG AS ALL DISPARITIES DO NOT FAVOR SOVIETS. IN ADDITION, SCHLESINGER INDICATED THAT US MAY AGREE TO A REDUCTION OF LAND BASED MISSILES AND INDICATED A DESIRE FOR A DIVERSIFIED YET INTERDEPENDENT STRATEGIC FORCE TO MAKE AVAILABLE TO PRESIDENT A REASONABLE RANGE OF STRATEGIC WEAPONS AS SOVIET AND CHINESE CAPABILITIES EVOLVE. AS HEDGE AGAINST FAILURE OF SALT TALKS, SCHLESINGER SAID U.S. MUST BEGIN DEVELOPMENT OF LARGER MISSILES AND MORE ACCURATE WARHEADS.

5. EUROPE. NYTIMES LEWIS REPORTS A PLAGUE OF POLITICAL TROUBLES HAS SWEEPED ACROSS THE EUROPEAN DEMOCRACIES LEAVING MOST GOVERNMENTS WEAKENED, SOME COUNTRIES WITHOUT EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE TURNING AWAY FROM RECOGNIZED LEADERSHIP. LEWIS FINDS UNDERLYING CAUSE OF PROBLEM TO BE ECONOMIC ILLS DUE LARGELY TO INFLATION AND THE OIL CRISIS. CASEY

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